

Ravalli County Weed District

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WEED BOARD MEETING ON 02/10/09

Members present: Sherry Lee, Randy Maxwell, Lance Brown, Gil Gale, and Kellieann Morris.

Others present: Dan Dunagan, Melissa Maggio, and Shane Arnott.

1/20/09 Minutes: The minutes from the 1/20/09 meeting were emailed to all board members. Randy motioned to approve and Lance seconded the minutes from 1/20/09 as is. Board approved.

Board Reports: None

Forest Service Report: Gil said he doesn't know a lot yet about the 'stimulus package'. He has put in about \$ 100,000 in grant request to RAC (resource advisory committee). The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation has expressed interest getting involved with Gil's programs on elk habitat. Most of what Gil is asking for will go to the rush skeletonweed problem. Some of the money should still go in our participating agreement. 2010 looks to be a tough year for Gil's budget but hopefully he can ride it out with RAC. He is also asking for funds to get ahead of the growing aquatic weed problem since prevention is going to be our best chance to keep them out. Also much of the 'stimulus' will probably go to fire and fuels reduction. Lance asked what projects are going on the north part of the forest. Gil said that the new road contracts are in place and the will be road work in the north. Also there will be more work on toadflax in Willoughby 40 and Sweeny Creek. Shane commented that on some access to forest roads there seems to be a 'no mans land' from the end of the county road to the beginning of the forest road. Who has jurisdiction in these parts? Gil said that they should have legal easements on all forest accesses and these easements need to be sprayed also.

Education Report: Melissa discussed her report and was attached with the coordinators report.

Coordinator's Report: Kellie read her coordinators report and copies were handed out along with the education report.

Old Business:

- **Re – Evaluation of the Subdivision Fees:** Kellie stated that she went in front of the commissioners concerning our proposed fee increases for voluntary agreements and subdivisions. Voluntary agreements were fine to cover the costs of the new signs and implementation. Subdivisions on the other hand caused some controversy among the commissioners. Primarily, there was dissent concerning charging fees at the beginning and the end of the subdivision. There were also comments concerning the charging by the lot and would like to see the charge by the acre. They also did not want to us to charge upfront and at final. Lincoln County charges a base fee and a lot fee upfront with there weed management plan and sign off at the end if the plan was followed and the work done. Evelyn Locke has a subdivision and she is very concerned about the fees she is being charged for her subdivision and she claims she can't afford it. Kellie explained her circumstances and the history and the board had a lengthy discussion but overall felt that the fee structure has been in place and could not justify making exceptions. Discussion moved back to the ideas of changing our fee structure based on the commissioner's comments. Shane commented that we looked at the lot vs. acre scenarios previously and a lot charge seem to be the most fair and should not be thrown out. Gil suggested developing a graduated fee based on lot size. Suggestions of all type were suggested, acres, lots, hourly, ect. Other counties such as Lincoln, charge a base plus a lot fee for majors. The board asked Kellie to re-work the fees and what to base it on that is fair and equitable for all subdivisions and covers the time and costs of the weed district.
- **Update on program changes:**
Kellie stated that she went back to the commissioners concerning our proposed program changes for the complaint process (weed law), voluntary agreements, and subdivision. Kellie said that the commissioners made Karen give them a timeline of when she would get them done which will be 3 weeks. They verbally said they do back us so its just the legal wording.

- **Other old Business:**

New Business:

- **2009 Grant presentations:** Kellie, Melissa, and Shane, presented their grants proposals that were submitted to the Montana Dept. of Agriculture, Noxious Weed Trust Fund. They are, "Stop the Knext Knapweed 09", "Bitterroot Bio-control 09", "Weed Awareness campaign" and "Bitterroot Blueweed 09".
 - **Subdivision / Gravel Pit Review:**
 - Wisdom Commercial lots (behind Super One in Stevensville) 2 lots – owner Vic Ralls
 - North Bear Creek Estates – 24 acres – Steve PowellRandy motioned to approve the weed management plans, Lance seconded.
 - **Other New Business:**
 - Randy asked about our vehicle situation again and if we were going to proceed with a travel car. Kellie said that at the next meeting she would bring some options for the board to approve.
 - **Public Input:** None
- Meeting adjourned at 9.45 pm.
Next meeting will be March 10th at 7:00 pm in the extension office meeting room. (If available).
Respectfully submitted,
Shane Arnott

Approved 3/10/09